

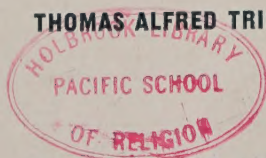
# SOCIAL

# ACT-ION

## THE FARMER'S SEARCH FOR ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY

by

THOMAS ALFRED TRIPP



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April 15, 1941

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Have you sent in your renewal to **SOCIAL ACTION**? You will find the expiration date of your subscription on the envelope in which your magazine is enclosed. . . . Please remember to give us two weeks notice of any change of address.

## IF YOU WANT TO UNDERSTAND —

Read "The Farmer's Search for Economic Democracy," by Thomas A. Tripp. This is an important article. Now is the time to write it; now is the time to read it. It ought to be read by the rural clergy and by the city clergy. It ought to be read before the tap, tap, tap of the auctioneer's hammer, dispossessing the bankrupt farmers, begins to sound throughout the land. It ought to be read before the Farmers' Holiday group starts patrolling the highways of the Northwest. It ought to be read before judges find themselves face to face with enraged farmers in the law courts of Iowa. It ought to be read before the Communists organize the sharecroppers in the south or the migrants in California.

The Rust brothers have announced mass production in cotton picking machines for 1941. It is not necessary to repeat the story which Steinbeck has dramatized about California. On my desk lies a copy of The Congressional Record which prophesies on the basis of qualified observers that the displacement of population in the Corn Belt will not be unlike that which has already taken place in the south and in the far west. Agriculture is evidently going into its mechanized stage. There will be consolidation of ownership and a vast army of unemployed will be on the road. The selective draft is bound to play a part in the dislocation of farm youth.

Add to all this the displacement of population by the new technology on the farm, the fact that this war has already eliminated the foreign market for our farm products and you have a completed formula for a disturbed and agitated farm group in the not-distant future.

This article, so excellently written by Mr. Tripp, is really in the interest of social reconciliation. It is in line with what Carl Landes of the Fellowship of Reconciliation is trying to do when he recently took up his residence at Merom Rural Life Institute with the announcement that reconciliation must begin at home. No longer can we point to Geneva and say that the problem of a social peace is dependent on something which takes place on another continent.

I commend this article to every member of that reading constituency of *Social Action* who is willing to pay the price of intelligent concern about our national problems.

—ARTHUR E. HOLT

# THE FARMER'S SEARCH FOR ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY

by THOMAS ALFRED TRIPP

*"The nation that sows the winds of neglect and of favoritism, will reap whirlwinds of discontent and anarchy."—John A. Simpson, late President of the Farmers' Union.*

Political unrest among farmers has been a recurrent phenomenon in American history. During certain periods the farmer has been among the relatively satisfied elements in the population but at other times his unrest has become so acute as to be almost revolutionary. Whenever things have gone well with the farmer his political behavior has taken on a more conservative pattern and he has been inclined to identify himself, psychologically, with the urban class whose economic status was similar to his own. But when conditions have not been right he has revolted. An agrarian crusade, a farmer-class consciousness, has always spread over the agricultural regions of America whenever the farmer has felt strong dissatisfaction.

## *Farmers in Politics*

How will the farmer vote? Why did the farmer vote as he did? These are perennial questions before and after an election, when the farmer's political outlook is a matter of great importance to the whole country. His political behavior takes on added significance as an economic barometer, since national depressions usually arrive in agriculture some time before they reach industry and business. For example, the severe depression which fell upon the urban economy in 1929 had been felt with considerable intensity by the farmers of the country throughout most of the 1920's. Though they would not have an infallible omen, economic and political prophets might do well to watch

the agrarian situation for storm warnings of nationwide difficulty and for coming shifts in national politics.

Agrarian unrest has always been due to economic pressures upon the farmer. Unrest may be due to pressures from within the rural environment. Maladjustment within agriculture may result from such causes as unmarketable surpluses, severe crop failures and damaging competition between farming regions.

Again, the farmer may revolt because of pressures from the urban economy. Continued disparity between agriculture and industry, unfavorable to the farmer, is a condition that frequently leads to a new series of agrarian reforms as a result of farmer-bloc action. Whatever the cause, farm revolts always

**Displaying their banners, thousands of farmers storm the doors of the State Capitol in Lincoln, Nebraska, to present their relief demands to the Legislature.**

*Photo by Acme*



result from pressures which arise from forces beyond the control of the individual farmer but which he hopes to conquer by united action.

The farmer is slow to anger but, once sufficiently enraged, he reacts vigorously in an effort to improve his status. There may be an element of lethargy in the rural psychology which causes the farmer, nearly always on the short end of the national income, to be long-suffering. He will "take it lying down" for a time but there is a limit to his patience.

Farm revolts are, generally, more or less vigorous attempts at agricultural reform through the use of the ballot and pressure-group action for the enactment of laws. They sometimes take the form of a radical crusade and armed resistance.

Abstract economic theories are of slight interest to the average farmer. He is not given to "isms." He is a thorough-going American, though he seldom makes high-sounding speeches about "Americanism." Even when his anger is at its highest pitch, he is usually not trying to change the economic order. He is not trying to "build a new world." A new agrarian crusade appears when he is trying to get his farm back or to obtain a better price for his products. Once he has gained such objectives he returns to his political normalcy as an actual, or potential, property owner.

The farmer does not always know just whom or what to fight. "Personal devils" in the form of "corporations," "Wall Street," "railroads," "money interests," "middlemen" and "city slickers" have been the targets of agrarian indignation from time to time. Panaceas have often been ill-conceived. However, a rising tide of farm dissatisfaction usually results in the organization of a new agrarian movement, in a flood of farm legislation and in a degree of relief for agriculture. In any case, the story of the farmer's struggle for an equitable share in the nation's goods and services is an important chapter in American trial-and-error democracy.

## EARLY FARM REVOLTS IN AMERICA

Some foretaste of possible future farm revolts may be gained by a brief review of the main issues in certain agrarian crusades of the past. The following survey will remind the reader of some of the numerous farm revolts in American history.

### *Early Minor Revolts*

Two occurrences in the last quarter of the Eighteenth Century are typical of early minor farm revolts. The first was Shays' Rebellion in 1786, an uprising of isolated Massachusetts agrarians under the leadership of Daniel Shays who had been a captain in the Revolution.

Following the Revolutionary War the farm situation became desperate. The good markets and high prices which the Colonial farmers had enjoyed while feeding the armies of both sides were gone. The costs of the war had culminated in huge debts for the national and state governments and the consequent heavy tax burden fell heavily upon the low-income farmers. Farm mortgages were almost universal. Loss of soil fertility through unwise farming methods and exploitation of the land for war supplies had reduced agricultural production. Merchants and money-lenders in Boston and other seaboard centers had obtained legislation to protect their property rights, to facilitate foreclosures and to prevent currency inflation.

The harassed farmers of Massachusetts rose in armed rebellion. Paralyzing the courts for a time, they demanded a stay of debt collection, more paper money, a scaling-down of government debts and a revision of the State Constitution to alter the provisions favorable to vested industrial and commercial interests. After some bloodshed, the state militia put down the rebellion, but not before it had resulted in temporary "stay laws" and "cheap money." In 1787, however, the Constitution of Massachusetts was revised without benefit of agrarian representation and with small attention to the needs of agriculture. The farmer lost the battle of Shays' Rebellion but the issues

of this revolt are among those which have continued to plague the nation from time to time ever since that famous struggle.

The Whiskey Rebellion of western Pennsylvania farmers in 1794 was a second minor revolt. Because of poor roads and the distance to market the backwoods farmers had acquired the practice of distilling their grain, particularly corn and rye, into whiskey in order to reduce the bulk to be transported. To increase the revenue of the national government, Congress, upon the recommendation of Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton, placed a special excise tax on whiskey. The frontier farmers rose against the excisemen who sought to enforce the levy, burning their homes and driving them out of the communities. The Government dispatched a large armed force to quell the riots, but not before blood had been shed in a revolt arising out of the perennial farm problems of taxation and transportation.

### *The Jeffersonian Revolt*

Jeffersonian agrarianism must be classed as a major revolt because it profoundly influenced the character of the political and economic system in America. It was no mere localized disturbance, as were the Shays and the Whiskey rebellions. It was national in scope. Thomas Jefferson became a political leader of American farmers because of his faith in the common man of the soil as against the urban proletariat and the rich. Jefferson was a wealthy aristocrat but he always maintained an interest in economic democracy for the plain people, particularly for farmers. His own words express this faith; farmers "are the true representatives of the great American interest, and are alone to be relied upon for expressing the proper American sentiments."

The farmers of the period were ready, politically, for the rise of Jeffersonianism. They had watched, with growing concern, the efforts of Hamilton to build a government of the capitalist class. They believed that the Federalists were showing favoritism to business, commerce and finance to the neglect of

agriculture. The existing disparity between agricultural and other economic groups supported their contention.

The great planters of the South and the small farmers of the western frontier were deeply in debt. They were naturally distrustful of the financial centers of the North and East, where bankers were receiving as much as 12 per cent interest on their loans to the government, while the farmers had to pay their share of the tax bill without profiting. This state of affairs helped to turn the agrarian mind against the United States Bank through which the financial operations were handled. Moreover, the national debt was too large to please the farmers. They were, therefore, interested in Jefferson's proposal to pay off the debt to save interest.

Free land was another issue of vital importance to farmers. Hamilton proposed the sale of the public domain as a source of revenue for the government. This plan would have encouraged speculation. Farmers would have been faced with the problem of paying for high-priced land. Supported by strong agrarian pressure, Jefferson led the successful movement to give the farmer the public land for a small fee. Whether, in the long run, this outcome was good or bad as a national land policy, it certainly was a decisive factor in the rapid rate of western expansion and it placed the farmers firmly in the ranks of Jeffersonianism. When, through a stroke of fortune, Jefferson was later able to accomplish the Louisiana Purchase, land was made available on a scale so vast as to be beyond even the wildest dreams of the land-hungry farmer.

Under the leadership of the Federalist party, direct taxes on homes, farm land and slaves had fallen heavily upon all lower income owners and particularly upon the agrarian population. Farmers have always been vexed by taxation systems based on land holdings. Land is the basis of his enterprise and he resists any tax plan which penalizes his capital investment. The Jeffersonian revolt was struggling with one of the most controversial agrarian issues when it undertook to deal with the land tax.

The western farmer had, as always, the problem of transportation for his products. The nation was just becoming aware of the need for highways and waterways. But the Federalists had not succeeded to the satisfaction of the farmer in building roads nor in keeping the Mississippi open in the face of French occupation of New Orleans. Jeffersonianism stood for both programs and, in the Louisiana Purchase, completely accomplished the latter.

Finally, the farmer was psychologically prepared for the leadership of Jefferson. Frontier influences encouraged individualism and freedom. The doctrines of the Declaration of Independence and the Revolution still rang in his ears. The human right to "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness" had been wrested from England. Now the people, especially the agrarians, did not propose to let the new government curtail that right in favor of a propertied class located mostly in the cities.

In Jeffersonianism the farmers, along with the city working classes, stood on the side of the individual against the supremacy of property rights in a conflict which has never been completely resolved. In doing so they profoundly influenced the future character of American politics. The Jeffersonian revolt was accomplished by ballots rather than bullets. It was a democratic crusade accomplished by democratic means. It succeeded because its political philosophy was adjusted to the mind of the farmer and coincided with his practical needs for better transportation and markets, cheaper land, lighter taxes and economic freedom.

Jeffersonian agrarianism has persisted as a factor in American politics. One of the strongest agrarian movements during the next half-century came in 1828 when the opposition of small western farmers to the older East elected Andrew Jackson. Jacksonianism generated sufficient force in the agrarian movement to create an unconscious unity which held the farmers together until their front was disastrously broken by the War between the States.

### *Civil War Agrarianism*

The War between the States was much more than a moral fight to abolish slavery. Although there were many elements in the conflict, it was, most of all, a struggle between two business systems. In the final analysis, the Civil War was an expression of a revolt of northern and western farmers against southern planters who were serious competitors by reason of their use of cheap slave labor.

The slave-labor plantation of the South was out of harmony with northern and western agriculture. There was a difference in psychology. The southern planters had time for leisure and cultural pursuits while the northern and western farmer toiled under the hot sun from dawn to dusk. The southern planter was a "gentleman" while the small farmer remained a "worker."

The large-scale plantation with its chattel labor had an unfair advantage in competing with the more modest western farm on which family subsistence had to be cared for before there was a surplus for market. There were, of course, many small farmers in the South who were forced to compete with the plantation system. Three-fourths of the southern whites never owned slaves, but sectional interests carried them into the conflict on the side of the planters. Although the poor whites on the farms of the South suffered more disadvantage from the planter system than did the small farmers elsewhere, they went along with the Confederacy because of sectional loyalty.

The tariff was another cause of dissension. Southern business, in competition with northern commerce, found direct foreign markets of its own. It, therefore, came to seek higher tariff walls for its own protection. Cotton planters of the South were generally favorable to the tariff, in so far as they were interested in it. But western farmers have never liked a high tariff, unless it were for their own protection. Hence, one more wedge was driven between them and the southerners.

Western farmers joined, also, the fight to prevent the enlargement of slave territory in order to protect themselves against the representatives of the planters in the national government and to maintain a balance of political power.

The agrarian conflict alone would probably never have led to war but, along with the other contributing factors, both economic and moral, it played its part. And, once more, it illustrated typical causes of farm revolts—tariffs, sectional competition, regional psychology and conflict with business interests.

## RECENT FARM REVOLTS<sup>1</sup>

The third of a century following the War between the States was a time of intensive readjustment, first to post-war difficulties and then to alternating periods of prosperity and panic. These years witnessed the last sprint of the westward movement to free land with the closing of the frontier and the building of the great transcontinental railroads. The farmers were in debt again and, during most of the period, their share in the national income was customarily meager.

Farm revolts raged throughout the 1870's, 1880's and 1890's with varying degrees of intensity, particularly in the Middle West, constituting the greatest agrarian crusade in American history. This stirring movement grew out of the maladjustments which were the growing pains of a nation.

This series of farm revolts did more to affect the future direction of the American economic order than any other event, with the possible exception of the Revolution. During this period the farmer had more political influence than at any time before or since. Farmers organized again and again. The Grange and the Farmers' Alliance, each in its turn, exerted great power. Farmers formed third party movements and banded together at intervals to put pressure upon the two

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1. See, especially, Hicks, John D., *The Populist Revolt*, and Buck, Solon J., *The Agrarian Crusade*.

traditional parties. Without really winning a national election, the farmers gained much in political experience and won more for agriculture than they had during all the years since the founding of the Republic.

### *The Granger Movement*

The Granger movement got its name from the prevailing farmers' organization of the period—the Patrons of Husbandry, commonly called the Grange. However, the Granger movement was more inclusive than the Grange, though that body had a large part in the crusade. The Grange was organized in 1867 to encourage better farming, improved rural living, good citizenship and rural education. These purposes were mild enough but to them were added, later, others which more clearly reflected the mood of the embattled farmers.

The Grange proclaimed that it was not a political organization but that its members were to exercise their individual citizenship. And that is what they did. Grange members and others began to express themselves politically through numerous channels.

In addition to participation in the two major parties, some farmers joined the Liberal Republican Party. This movement began in Missouri where it won the election in 1870. By 1872 the spread of its influence resulted in a national convention which nominated Horace Greeley for President. Although the Democrats, meeting later, accepted the platform and candidate of the Liberal Republicans the regular Republicans re-elected Grant. For all practical purposes the Liberal Republican Party failed after this one bid for power but it had served for a short season as a medium of expression for various dissatisfied groups, including some farmers. Its platform contained some well-recognized agrarian issues but there were so many diverse elements which had no relationship to the interests of agriculture that the party could not hold together nor catch the continued loyalty of the farmers.

By the time of the panic of 1873 the farmers were up in arms again if, indeed, they had ever settled down since the war. This time the Grange had a more direct part in the crusade. The local Grange meetings became forums for excited agitation. Farm mortgages were being foreclosed by the hundreds. The farmer's world was tumbling all about him. He naturally turned to his only organization, the Grange, with the expectation that it would help him out of his troubles. Here he could, at least, discuss the wrongs that impoverished him. On Independence Day in 1873 farmers' picnics everywhere became political rallies. There was so much excitement in the rural districts that the occasion has been called the "Farmers' Fourth of July."

In 1874 the Grange reached the peak of its power, with thousands of local lodges in thirty-two states and with half a million members. The National Grange met in St. Louis that year, adopted a strong statement of purpose which included an approval of the establishment of cooperatives and condemned "the credit system, the fashion system and every other system tending to prodigality and bankruptcy." The Patrons, also, declared themselves as opposed to monopolies and high freight rates and stood for other typical agrarian reforms.

This more vigorous policy was due apparently to pressure from the farm masses both in and out of the Grange. It is notable that, in deep resentment, the farmers of the West succeeded in establishing once and for all, through the Granger movement, the right of the government to regulate the railroads and other public utilities. Moreover, they discovered the "middleman;" and that hated demon of agrarianism produced in them a mood which eventually led to much commerce regulation, just as agitation against monopolies resulted, at last, in anti-trust laws.

Soon after the successes of 1874, the Patrons of Husbandry began to decline but the general agrarian crusade, known as the Granger Movement, went vigorously on. The Grange had

grown too rapidly for permanency and had no concrete political program. It provided a forum for the members but left them to the mercies of the major parties at election time. Without a party of their own the farmers' enthusiasm for the Grange was dissipated in the heat of the campaigns in which, incidentally, they were sometimes quite successful in state and local elections. Although the Grange was politically ineffective, it still does splendid service today as the oldest and largest of the major farm organizations. But the Granger movement took new forms.

### *The Farmers' Alliance*

Although the Grange had lost prestige, the farmers were not ready to stop their crusade. They were still suffering from their old troubles, particularly low prices and high freight rates. The agricultural depression of the Seventies continued, with varying degrees of intensity, throughout the Eighties. The embattled farmers turned to new organizations.

This period marked the first organization of southern farmers to have any great significance in the national agrarian movement. The Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union was organized in Texas about 1875 and spread to adjoining southern states. With a platform similar to the principles of the Grange, it was largely engrossed in cooperative business enterprises and its locals gave prominent place to social functions since women were included in the membership.

The southern Alliance adopted, later, a more radical statement of "demands" which included higher taxation of land held for speculation, prohibition of alien ownership of land, prevention of the practice of dealing in futures of farm products, adequate taxation of the railroads, payment of the national debt, freely coining both silver and gold and increasing the paper currency. In 1887, it united with the Farmers' Union, a contemporary Texas state organization, to form the National Farmers' Alliance and Cooperative Union of America.

The Agricultural Wheel, another southern movement, originated in Arkansas in 1882. It spread through the South, absorbing some of the many other local groups which were springing up among farmers everywhere. The Wheel was similar in purpose to the Alliance but put additional emphasis upon measures to combat corruption in politics, monopolies and the mortgage system. In 1888, the Wheel and the southern Alliance were united to form the Farmers' and Laborers' Union of America. The united organization tried, without much success, to organize in the northern states and it declined rapidly after 1890.

Meanwhile, in the northwestern states another organization had gained prominence; namely, the National Farmers' Alliance which was formed in 1880. This group did less cooperative business but entered more actively into politics than had the southern Alliance. It stood for the free coinage of silver, issuance of paper money directly to the people, regulation and ultimate ownership of the railroads and telegraph system and for other measures which were expected to benefit agriculture.

The Alliance movement, both North and South, exerted considerable influence upon state and national legislation by the perpetual threat of political revolt, by bolting the older parties from time to time and by voting on a farmer-class pattern for the candidates of the older parties who could give proper evidence of favoring agrarian reforms. America would be of profoundly different character had it not been for the agrarian revolution sponsored by the Alliances, the Wheels and other farm organizations of this period.

During the era of the Grange and the Alliances the farmers maintained a keen interest in politics, for the ballot was the only means which promised real relief from their difficulties. The first important political movement with agrarian roots was the Greenback Party organized in 1874. Its main platform planks declared for inflation of the currency through the printing of greenbacks, such as those which had been used during

the Civil War, and for the free coinage of silver. As always, the debt-ridden farmer felt the need of easier money. The Party's platforms, from year to year, included the farmer's opposition to monopolies, declared in favor of better labor laws and sought to open the last frontier of free land in Oklahoma and elsewhere. Beginning in 1876, it placed a national ticket in the field three consecutive times. Never polling a great vote, its influence was largely educational and contributed to the Populist revolt which followed.

### *The Populist Revolt*

The Populist revolt, a culmination of all the agrarian movements which had preceded it since the Civil War, was the strongest bid for political power ever made by the American farmers as a class. A list of some of the main grievances of western farmers during this period reveals the nature of the whole agrarian crusade. These are the issues which provoked the Populist movement and which might lead to future farm revolts.

1. Prices for farm products were so low during much of this period that it was often impossible to recover the cost of production.

2. Overproduction, with large sections of the population underfed, plagued agriculture and raised the problem of underconsumption due to the lack of purchasing power of the urban masses.

3. High freight rates were added to the farmers' costs and caused continued agrarian opposition to the railroads.

4. "Monopolies" continued to be the target of farmer-indignation, directed mainly at the railroads for their arbitrary rate-fixing and at the grain dealers for their price-fixing and grading methods.

5. "Corporations" represented a special set of enemies in the farmer's mind, chiefly because of the privileged status of the railroads with their large land holdings and special im-

munities, and because of the relatively advantageous position of urban business and finance.

6. The tariff was criticized by the farmers who felt that it protected the manufacturer at their expense.

7. Tax burdens fell heavily upon the farmers whose land was, and always is, quite vulnerable to the tax collector.

8. The desire for currency inflation, a solution which had led to various greenback and free-silver movements within the chain of revolts throughout the period, was a greater issue than ever before.

9. Agitation for the last parcels of free land remaining in the West and Southwest still engaged the attention of the farmers.

### ***Railroads and The Farmer***

Since they arose again and again as an agrarian issue, the railroads deserve a special word. In the first place, the railroads were closely related to the homestead policy of the government. They were built with the strong approval of the farmers who were developing the West. To foster the construction of the great transcontinental systems the government made large grants of land to the railroad companies. In some cases, the systems got as much as every alternate section of land on both sides of their lines for forty miles each way.

By 1873 the government had granted the western railroads 35 million acres of land and had pledged 145 million acres more. In 1890 their land interests deeply affected the West. The sale of this land by the railroads led to wild speculation and ran up the cost of farms to the farmers. As the supply of free land approached the point of exhaustion the farmers looked enviously at the large holdings still in the hands of the railroads.

The farmers had welcomed the building of the railroads as their development made possible the rapid expansion of the West. The new means of transportation took people to the

West and carried farm products to market. Some farmers bought shares in the railroads to make possible the construction of the lines, frequently mortgaging their farms for this purpose. When the railroads failed, as they usually did, the farmers not only got no returns on their investment, but often lost their farms by foreclosure. The farmers had overexpanded their investments to develop the West. Thus, their resentment toward the railroads could be traced to causes which the farmers, themselves, had helped to create.

The relatively high level of freight rates was, of course, the more immediate cause of farmer opposition to the railroads. The railroads had a monopoly on long-distance transportation. In spite of regulations, they had great power and fixed the rates about as they wished to the disadvantage of the farmers who fought them all the way.

### *The People's Party*

The People's Party was organized in 1891 as a direct outgrowth of the Granger and Farmers' Alliance movements and entered the state elections of 1892. In the national campaign of 1894, its presidential candidate was James B. Weaver, a veteran agrarian reformer and perpetual third-party leader. The national ticket carried only 8½ per cent of the popular vote but the Party's success in certain western states and its campaign of agitation had great influence upon the agricultural policies of the country.

The campaign of 1894 was one of the hottest in history. Throughout the West, angry farmers gathered in schools, churches, halls and parks in a protest which became a mighty political upheaval. In Kansas, for example, "Sockless" Jerry Simpson and Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Lease, two fiery agrarian orators, carried the revolt to the pitch of a religious crusade. Mrs. Lease urged the farmers to "raise less corn and more hell." They apparently did the latter. Hatred for the older parties, Wall Street and the, allegedly, English-controlled gold

standard was rampant. It was, indeed, a farmer-class movement of vast proportions.

Kansas had been especially turbulent after the election of 1892 when upon certain contested seats depended the control of the lower house of the legislature. The Populists had control of the senate and, in the assembly, they fought to the last ditch. Hordes of Populist farmers descended on Topeka, fully armed and intent upon forcing a recognition of their cause. The matter was finally settled in the courts in favor of the Republicans but the Populists girded themselves for the battle of 1896.

About this time Henry Mayer drew a cartoon which became famous as an expression of the western farmers' point of view. It showed a map of the United States with a cow superimposed upon it. Her head was in the Middle West and her hind legs were in New York. A Western farmer was feeding the cow and a Wall Street banker was milking her, while frock-coated New England financiers were carrying off the milk toward Boston!

*Reproduced from "The Pageant of America,"  
copyright Yale University Press*



Many country newspapers republished the cartoon, which first appeared in *Coin's Financial School*, and more than one farmer clipped it to show to his friends as proof of the cause of his plight, as he saw it.

The money question was the outstanding issue in the 1896 campaign. Paper currency, the free coinage of silver on the ratio of "sixteen to one" and a reform of the banking and treasury systems became the battle cry of the agrarians, joined by laborers and certain other groups. The issue became clear when the Republicans, nominating William McKinley, unequivocally declared for the gold standard while the Democrats stood for bimetallism with silver as a strong point. The Populists named the Democratic candidate, William Jennings Bryan, as their own standard-bearer. Bryan's famous "Cross of Gold" speech and the Democratic agrarian platform made a fusion ticket practically a necessity. The ticket carried more than 48 per cent of the popular vote. It received the electoral vote of all but five states west of the Mississippi and of all but two of the southern states. However, McKinley won by carrying the rest of the country.

Having cast its lot in the fusion with the Democrats, the People's Party was unable to gather much strength again. However, it had obtained many of its objectives through its influence upon the older parties and through many local victories. It had succeeded, also, in establishing the principle of independent voting among farmers and in stirring up a progressive movement which, to some degree, still lives in the great agricultural regions.

### *Agrarian Activities*

In the period between the collapse of the Populist revolt in 1896 and the World War, agriculture did only fairly well but it did well enough to prevent any notable farm rebellion. The People's Party had a ticket in three more national elections but from 1900 onward it polled less than one per cent of the popular vote and after 1908 it disappeared altogether.

In 1900, the Progressive Party, which was largely an agrarian movement centered in the Middle West, began to attain success in Wisconsin under the leadership of Robert LaFollette. The Party's objectives, which included the control of corporations, railroads, trusts and other monopolies, revealed the fact that it had its roots in the farm movements of the preceding three decades. The Bull Moosers, with Theodore Roosevelt as their leader, stood second in the election of 1912 when they lost their national significance because of the victory of Wilsonian liberalism.

In 1902, the Farmers' Union, technically the Farmers' Educational and Cooperative Union of America, was organized. The Farmers' Union is a progressive movement with its greatest strength in the Middle West. It encourages a large cooperative enterprise among its local and state organizations. In recent years, it has shared significantly with other farm organizations in the development of agricultural legislation.

One indication of the recognition which farmers had gained was the appointment, in 1908 by President Theodore Roosevelt, of the Commission on Country Life. This Commission was designed to study country life with a view to the improvement of farming and rural living. Its report in 1909 gave impetus to many new movements for the strengthening of rural civilization.

Education and religion responded to the current emphases with special rural movements. Most of the larger religious denominations established town and country departments. The colleges of agriculture, inaugurated by the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890 and already doing good work, expanded their programs. The United States Department of Agriculture took increased interest in the farmers' culture and its Extension Service developed to maturity. With the rise of these organizational and educational approaches to rural life political agitation was practically superseded for a time and all was relatively quiet on the farm front until about the end of the World War.

## THE PRESENT FARM REVOLT

The New Deal of 1933 was essentially a farmer-labor revolt. It was a result of the agrarian discontent which followed the World War. Agricultural difficulties were deepened when labor was hit by general unemployment after the 1929 crash and the farmers demanded political action.

### *Causes of Revolt*

By 1932 the farm situation had become acute. In 1931 the index figure for the price of farm products dropped to 80 as compared with 209 in 1919. At the same time, the farmer's dollar was worth only 63 cents when the price he had to pay for consumer and capital goods was taken into account.

The total of farm receipts had fallen so low that farm families, representing approximately 25 per cent of the population, received only 9.3 per cent of the national income in the boom year of 1929. As far back as 1925, per capita farm income had dropped to 3 per cent below that of 1914, while all other groups in the population had attained a 22 per cent per capita net increase in the same period.

Taxes in 1932 were probably no higher for farmers than for other groups but the rate on land was almost double the pre-war ratio and the lack of ready cash for taxes made the burden heavy. Loss of land ownership from all causes was very high. More than 26 out of every 1,000 farms in the nation changed hands in 1930 through forced sales and this process continued with variations from year to year, reaching alarming figures in some states. In 1925 mortgages on all farm land equalled nearly 42 per cent of its total value. Because of the deflation in land prices, the situation became increasingly worse until many farms were mortgaged for more than they were worth in the early thirties.

Other factors aggravated the farmer's problems. Markets and prices had dropped seriously. Foreign trade had fallen victim to the growing nationalistic and self-sufficient policies of many

countries. Home markets had been decreased by depression, unemployment and a consequent general loss of purchasing power. Falling birth rates, diminishing immigration and the changing dietary habits of the American people further deepened the agricultural crisis. On top of all these difficulties, droughts caused crop failures for some farmers and surpluses upset the economy of others. Debt-ridden, "broke" and often landless, the farmer's plight could hardly have been worse. Many became migrants on the road and thousands more were destined to follow them. In such circumstances, revolt was inevitable.

### *Signs of Unrest*

The numerous signs of unrest which had been visible since the War may be illustrated by the story of the Non-Partisan League in North Dakota. Beginning in 1916, the League had rebelled against excessive freight rates, the weights and grading methods of privately owned grain elevators, speculation in farm products in the central markets and the absence of an adequate farm credit system. Its platform called for state ownership of terminal elevators, flour mills, stockyards, packing houses and cold storage plants. In addition, its members wanted state hail insurance, exemption of farm improvements from taxation, state inspection of grain buying methods and rural credit banks. The League won considerable success in North Dakota and its influence also affected the political situation in other Upper Mississippi states.

The general agrarian revolt of the post-war period produced another farm organization, the second strongest among those which exist today; namely, the American Farm Bureau Federation, organized in 1919. The compelling cause of this organization was the feeling "that farmers did not have an adequate voice in determining national policies." It sought, also, to impress the farmers' wishes upon state, county and community affairs. Today its members participate in independent farm cooperatives. The organization has made important contribu-

tions to farm legislative programs and, in some states, it maintains a close relationship to the county agricultural extension service. Its greatest strength at present is in the Corn and Cotton Belts.

Under pressure from the Non-Partisan League, the American Farm Bureau Federation and other farm groups each Administration during the 1920's tried various experiments in agricultural reform. President Hoover, particularly, inaugurated a most ambitious farm program in his Federal Farm Board plan. But it was not enough to stem the tide of disaster.

When Franklin D. Roosevelt arrived on the scene promising agricultural reform, adjustment of the monetary system, control of corporations and monopolies, adequate farm credit and the like, the farmer was generally ready to heed. Here was a message to warm his heart. The Rooseveltian liberal philosophy, which condemned the money lenders and big business, struck fire with the troubled agrarians. The New Deal, with its gigantic Agricultural Adjustment Administration program, was on its way.

But before the AAA could get started more farm trouble was still to be experienced, especially in the Middle West. Farm mortgage foreclosures, for example, produced revolts in overt form. Judges were threatened with hangings for foreclosure proceedings. One-cent sales, in which farmers of a neighborhood bought and returned foreclosed farms to the owner, were not uncommon. Another typical demonstration was the Farm Holiday Association which sought to starve the cities into cooperation and to raise prices by a refusal to deliver farm products to the markets.

The moratorium on farm mortgages in 1935 and the effects of the AAA program finally relieved the situation to some extent and the strikes subsided. In 1934, however, the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union—an organization composed of tenants, sharecroppers, migrant workers and day laborers—was formed as a pressure group representing the underprivileged farm population of the South. That all was not well with agriculture,

*Photo by Acme*

### MORTGAGE AUCTION NETS \$4.90

So ran a not uncommon newspaper headline in the days of one-cent sales when farmers of a neighborhood bought and returned a foreclosed farm to the owner.

even yet, was further demonstrated by the appearance, in the election of 1936, of the Union Party with William Lemke as the Presidential candidate and Father Coughlin as a sponsor.

### *New Deal Agrarianism*

The New Deal responded with a typical pattern of agrarian reform to the threat of farm revolts. Cheaper money was obtained by a devaluation of the dollar, by the printing of three billions in paper dollars and by expanding government credit for relief spending. A regulated currency, rather than the gold standard dollar, together with a gold and silver purchase

program were established as the means of manipulating this flexible monetary system.

The problem of farm prices was attacked by a program for the control of surpluses and by various government purchase and loan plans. Farm credit was established through such methods as land banks and seed loans. New elements in the farm program included resettlement, rural housing, rural electrification, soil conservation and land reclamation.

Whatever criticism may be levelled at the New Deal farm program, it must be remembered that it is the direct result of an agrarian revolt led by the great farmers' organizations. By maintaining their powerful and continuous agricultural lobby in Washington they keep a watchful eye upon the New Deal farm program. While they stand firmly for the farmers' cause they also recognize the community of interest between agriculture, labor and capital.

The farmers' organizations — the Farmers' Union, Farm Bureau and the Grange — did valiant service in representing the farmers' cause in Washington during the late 1920's and the early 1930's. Without them no one can say how much greater would have been the disaster. These modern farmers' organizations are characterized by a moderate policy and are guided by a seasoned leadership. In comparison with most of the earlier farm movements, they are less radical but more practical in politics and more experienced in getting legislative results.

Notwithstanding the large numbers of unorganized farmers and the difference of opinion between the various agrarian groups, the future welfare of American agriculture depends very largely upon the work of the farm organizations. Farmers cooperate not because they love cooperation but to meet the immediate needs of agriculture. The current farm revolt is one which expresses itself by relatively orderly legislative processes in its search for economic democracy. How long it will remain in that mood will be determined by the farm situation and the capacity of the government to meet the requirements of agriculture.

## WILL THE FARMERS REVOLT AGAIN?

Whether the farmers of America will revolt again and the probable location or form of the rebellion, if it comes, depends upon many unpredictable factors, both in the rural psychology and in the agricultural economy. But it may be assumed that revolts will occur whenever prolonged difficulty is felt by any considerable section of agriculture.

### *Agrarian Groups in America*

Groups in the rural population which might be provoked to revolt in the future include the following:

1. The organized farmers, totaling more than a million, in such powerful organizations as the Grange, Farm Bureau, Farmers' Union and others which already have a well-developed technique of cooperative political action.
2. The more than five millions of unorganized farmers who usually suffer more and receive relatively less redress in times of stress than organized farmers,—partly because they *are* unorganized and partly because there seems to be a natural selectivity of membership in farm organizations which automatically and unconsciously bars the participation of the less prosperous individuals.
3. The growing peasant-class in the American farm population which might eventually assert itself, provided its situation has not already beaten it into docile submission.
4. The millions of landless farmers who may not yet have lost their innate land-hunger and love of the soil to an extent which has killed their hope of ownership or thwarted their capacity for action on their own behalf.
5. The millions of tenant farmers in the landless class, representing over two-fifths of all farm operators, who are now forced to produce for two families—themselves and the landlord—on farms which, in many cases, are not capable of adequately supporting one family.

6. Sharecroppers, that most unfortunate farm tenancy group, most of whom have never experienced the so-called, "American way of life."

7. The million or more farm laborers who work for wages on the land without adequate income or security in most cases.

8. Migrants in the agricultural laborer group who are not only landless, but homeless as well.

9. The farm masses who make only a bare existence on the occupied marginal and submarginal land in this country.

10. The millions of surplus rural youth who, unable to migrate to the city and not needed in the country, are hopelessly piled up on the farms of the nation waiting for an opportunity or for leadership.

11. The hundreds of thousands of farm families on relief, many of whom live listlessly on the fringe of village and city society.

12. The masses in the propertyless proletariat in the rural towns, who, under the right circumstances, might join any combination of farmers in revolt.

13. The one-fourth, more or less, of American farmers, mostly included in the above classes, whose mode of life compares closely to that in urban slums.

14. Dissatisfied farmers of any class, or any combination of classes, who might join in a revolt with the labor movement—a dream that has seldom fully materialized but which is always a possibility.

15. The farmers of any section of the nation who find themselves under pressure from farmers in other sections or from the cities.

### *Signal for Revolt*

When will the farmers revolt again? It can be said that they are in revolt now in a more or less mild way. The national farm organizations are not entirely satisfied with the present agricultural situation. Millions of unorganized farmers continuously indulge in inarticulate mutterings regarding their plight. Whether

these signs of revolt will break out into more vigorous forms depends on future farming conditions.

There are at least four causes which could produce a new agrarian crusade and which might possibly materialize during the next few years. First, post-war economic maladjustment, the aftermath of all modern wars thus far, is sure to follow the present conflict. Production of food and fibre for the armies and for workers in the defense industries brings temporary prosperity to farmers. During the emergency, surpluses are consumed, production is increased and prices rise. The acceleration of production continues after the war but consumption declines. Prices collapse and a depression follows, first in agriculture and finally in business and throughout the nation. A farm revolt ensues as the farmers—sometimes in combination with other groups, particularly industrial laborers—search for readjustment.

The second possible cause of a farm revolt would exist in the coming to power of a conservative Administration; that is, one which was conservative at least in its farm policy. The recent history of most nations shows the necessity for a liberal farm program in times like these. England, France, Germany and others have had for years, and still have, their equivalent of America's Agricultural Adjustment Administration, including farm subsidies and some other features. Farm subsidies may not prove to be a sound agricultural policy, in the last analysis, but no large modern nation has yet found a substitute for them. Meanwhile, any administration in Washington which failed to present a farm program, at least as effective as the present one with all of its weaknesses, would be preparing the way for another farm revolt of huge proportion, perhaps the greatest in history.

Thirdly, an agrarian revolt might result from any general depression—whether due to post-war conditions, a general financial collapse arising from an impossible national debt, the usual behavior of business cycles or other causes. A recession in business and industry, leading to greater unemployment

and a consequent decline of purchasing power on the part of urban consumers, would be immediately felt in agriculture and would cause a farm revolt of more or less intensity.

Finally, an unusual leader might arise to capture the farmers and lead them in a revolt. The success of the late Huey Long in the rural areas of Louisiana is a recent example of what could happen. The landless and disinherited inarticulate farm groups are always potential followers of some timely leader, whether he be a rabble-rouser or a man of wisdom.

### *Areas of Revolt*

In what section of the nation are future revolts likely to arise? The Middle West and the Cotton Belt are the most probable locations because these regions have large enough populations to be politically effective. It is in these sections, too, that economic and social maladjustments are a constant threat to agriculture. Cotton-growing is already in great difficulty. But, because of the fact that the political leadership of the rural South is generally limited to the relatively well-to-do, revolts have been few in that section and this situation will probably continue, at least in the near future.

In the Corn Belt most of the farmers are of the middle class, the group in society which usually provides leadership for reforms. Revolts are the result of mass reaction to unfavorable conditions. Reforms, seeking to remove the causes of revolt, require leaders who have leisure time, leadership patterns and morale which enable them to extricate themselves from class-interests and to act on behalf of the inarticulate masses. The Corn Belt produces the type of farmer leadership which has led revolts in the past and which would, undoubtedly, be capable of doing so again. A revolt may be expected in the Middle West, therefore, whenever a serious agricultural maladjustment occurs there. However, while defense industries continue to stimulate the national economy, no such condition is in immediate prospect.

The Great Plains, of all sections, offers the greatest possi-

bility of revolt, though its potential effect is subdued, to a degree, by the sparseness of the population. From the states that are wholly or in part in the Great Plains have come numerous revolts in the past. The people of the region are of the class which could provide leadership for an agrarian crusade. Here the Farmers' Union with its liberal program is already strong. And, more important, the economic difficulties in the dry farming areas of the Plains provide a fertile soil for resentment. The strength shown by the opposition party in the 1940 election may have been the first sign of a coming revolt from the Plains states. Again, however, it is possible that the prosperity accompanying the defense program may delay such a movement indefinitely.

It must be remembered that prophecy is always hazardous. The political behavior of the farmer is particularly unpredictable and is influenced by such diverse forces that it is impossible to foretell the direction which it may take. And no one can tell what these disturbed times may produce nor where the next "danger spot" in agriculture will develop with sufficient intensity to cause a major crisis.

### *What the Farmer Wants Today*

A study of the current programs of the several farmers' organizations reveals the fact that, in general, they favor the current agricultural program but call for the removal of irritants which still threaten the renewal of farm revolt. The following list includes some of the principal demands of the agrarian movement today:

1. An improvement and speed-up of the current AAA program to conserve the soil, control surpluses and maintain parity prices.
2. The expansion of consumption of farm products through an increase of the purchasing power of the non-agricultural population.
3. A still more adequate credit system which will re-establish direct ownership of the land by dispossessed farmers.

4. Establishment of satisfactory tenant-owner relationships through legislation requiring equitable tenant contracts.

5. Development of a system in which tenants, sharecroppers and farm laborers may enjoy democratic participation in the AAA elections which determine the quotas and other regulations for the various crops from year to year.

6. A speed-up of the retirement of marginal and submarginal land with added control over reclamation programs which seek to bring new areas into cultivation through irrigation or other means.

7. Increase in the organization and volume of business of farm cooperatives as a means of buying consumer and capital goods or of marketing farm products and of financing farm ownership and operation.

8. Protection of the small family-sized farm from the present trend toward large corporation farms, large-scale private farming, land speculation and absentee landlordism.

9. Taxation based on ability to pay, i.e., more nearly related to income rather than so largely based upon the land holdings of farmers.

10. Extension of the Farm Security Administration program for disadvantaged farmers.

11. An intensification of the agricultural research programs of the United States Department of Agriculture and the state colleges of agriculture in order to extend the chemurgic uses of farm products.

12. Constant study of the monetary system about which the farmers seem to have some question now that they have approximately the type of money they have always favored.

13. An adequate program for farm youth, especially one adjusted to the needs of the millions of rural young people who are now unreached by current organizations.

14. Renewed efforts to enrich country civilization by the further extension or improvement of rural electrification, medical care, libraries, churches, schools and other agencies which contribute to rural culture.

### *Who Will Help the Farmer?*

The farmer can best help himself. The Government is already active but there may be danger in too much dependence upon government. In a democracy there is great need for the active participation of volunteer agencies in the interests of reform for farmers. Such institutions may do much to solve agricultural problems and preserve rural civilization. Farmers must, however, join and support rural organizations in order to receive help from them.

Farmers must cooperate. At present only one farmer in six is a member of a farm organization. More farmers should be organized if they are to have adequate representation in national affairs. Farm organizations should enlist more members in view of the fact that approximately five out of six farmers are still unorganized. Farmers' organizations have the opportunity to work for agricultural legislation, to give leadership to the cooperative movement and to provide community programs for rural people. These services should be extended to include more farm families, especially those in the lower income brackets.

Business, labor and agriculture must work together if any of them are to enjoy economic democracy. Cooperation between rural community agencies is essential. All institutions interested in the welfare of America must stand together on behalf of the farmers. The church, school and other rural organizations have special obligations along this line. It will require the sympathetic and vigorous efforts of government and of all other agencies to solve the problems of agriculture and rural civilization.

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## AMERICAN CHURCHES AND WORLD ORDER

*What Kind of World Do We Want?*

*How Can We Work For It?*

The churches of America are faced with a great task. Upon them falls the responsibility of providing the moral and spiritual leadership which will keep alive the hope for world organization and create the public opinion and intelligence which are essential to such organization.

To accomplish this, it is necessary for us to study the reasons for the present war and the adjustment and sacrifices which all nations, including our own, will have to make in order to build a world in which peace is possible.

Our Study Packet entitled "American Churches and World Order" is now ready. It will help an interested group to get started at once in studying the problems of reconstruction and the peace which is to follow the present war. Order from the Council for Social Action, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York, at 35c. each, including postage to any part of the United States.

# LABOR TROUBLE OR EMPLOYER TROUBLE?

by JAMES MYERS

Glaring headlines in the daily press announce strike after strike. Violence flares out. Charges and counter-charges fill the air. Whose fault is it?

What causes these strikes? How many and how serious are they? What are labor's demands? What wages do industrial workers receive, what hours do they work, what hazards of injury or death do they undergo? Is the cost of living rising? How long can workers count on continuance of their jobs in defense industries—are they engaged by the year, the day or the hour? If defense jobs are sure for a limited period only and workers may have to move to fill them, are they entitled to higher pay? Is labor unreasonable in its demands for wage increases, for the right to join unions and settle differences with employers through collective bargaining? What about exorbitant union initiation fees and labor racketeering?

On the other hand, are particular employers, and industry in general, greedily holding out to retain for themselves all the profits from defense orders? Are they unwilling to share their increased prosperity with the workers who turn out the goods? How many employers, in defiance of the law, still flatly deny or secretly but effectively oppose all efforts of workers to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing? Does such opposition to the law and to labor's basic rights set a good example of loyalty to democracy. Is the nation suffering from "labor trouble" or from "employer trouble?"

Who knows the answers to all these questions? Was the editor of *Social Action* more foolhardy in requesting the writer to discuss this subject in a thousand words—or was the writer the greater fool to accept the assignment? Probably we could not all agree even on the answer to that one! However, I believe the editor is right in assuming that there are certain standards of judgment—"yardsticks," if you will—which the intelligent person can usefully employ as he reads his newspaper.

What lies behind the headlines?

In the first place, every fair-minded individual must be willing to educate himself before making judgments. Do you know the answers to the questions I have listed above—and to many others? Are you willing to study the facts as they apply to a particular industrial dispute before judging who is right or wrong, or how much right or wrong each side may be?

In the second place, one must realize that if his knowledge of labor difficulties comes only from reading daily newspapers, he receives a distorted impression of the whole situation. This false impression is due not so much to anti-labor bias on the part of some papers, as to the fact that it is "News" only when there is labor trouble. Happy marriages are not headlined, but divorce scandals make the front pages. When unions get along well, there is seldom any mention of the fact in the papers. The truth is that if, on any given day, the newspapers were to print even brief accounts of union plants where there is no trouble, all other news would be crowded from the average paper.

And finally, there is nothing mysterious about the number of present strikes. Any student of industrial history could have foretold that they would happen. They always do occur in a period of upturn of business activity. The reasons are easily understood. Workers see their employers prospering. They know that increasing dividends are declared to stockholders. At the same time, labor begins to feel the strain of rising living costs on family budgets which have little or no margins. Demands for higher wages follow, both to meet the higher cost of living and to share in the increased prosperity of the company.

Wage raises are often obtained through negotiation in organized industries. In unorganized industries employers sometimes voluntarily increase wages and under such circumstances usually have no strikes. When they fail to raise wages justly and at the same time oppose the right of labor to organize and bargain collectively, strikes frequently result. Often the worst strikes occur where the history of opposition to the right of workers to organize has been longest and most bitter.

It has been my observation over a period of many years that, in general, there are fewer strikes where labor is organized and accepted on an industry-wide basis, than occur where there are no unions or where employers are still fighting against the formation of unions. After unions have been accepted by employers, machinery exists for the peaceable adjustment of differences. Even when agreements expire, there need be no stoppage of work if both sides agree to continue work while negotiations continue, with the understanding that any agreed upon changes will be retroactive. The United Mine Workers offered to follow this procedure in the soft coal industry but the operators at first refused, which alone caused any stoppage of production.

To be sure, as in other human institutions, serious faults exist in some areas of the labor movement. Racketeering in some crafts and industries, principally in building and service unions in some of our larger cities where employers often are also involved; jurisdictional difficulties, high initiation fees and other problems cry aloud for remedy and for more democratic control from within the movement. Yet, on the whole, the labor union movement stands as one of the greatest achievements of American democracy, giving to the common man a voice in his own economic destiny.

It would indeed be a tragedy if the democratic rights of labor were to be abrogated in the name of defense of democracy. The suggestion that the right to strike be entirely revoked and that arbitration be made compulsory is opposed by the Committee on Manufactures of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, as well as by labor itself. A scientific study of Labor and National Defense by the Twentieth Century Fund points out that compulsory arbitration with sharp penalties against strikers is unworkable in a democracy. Citing the experience of Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and the United States in 1917, the survey shows that voluntary mediation through a National Board brings satisfactory results when given a fair trial.

(For a fuller presentation of employer-employee relationships, see Mr. Myers' book, *Do You Know Labor?* National Home Library Foundation, 139 pp. 50c.)

## LEST WE FORGET

The International Relations Committee of the Council for Social Action has communicated recently with every Congregational Christian minister to request that our churches form groups to study the place of the United States in building a permanent peace.

What kind of world do you want? How can you work for it? These are questions which every thoughtful person must ask himself today. How much more important is it that those who call themselves Christian should be concerned with these questions.

Rev. Edgar H. S. Chandler of Jamaica Plain, Mass., has just returned from a trip to England, where he went as an ambassador of good will from our churches to those of our fellowship in Britain. He also represented the World Alliance and the American Section of the World Council of Churches. While he was there, he visited many parts of Great Britain and conferred with leading churchmen as well as with governmental officials.

Nowhere and at no time did he hear an expression of a desire that the United States should enter the war. But the question that was asked of Mr. Chandler by people of every kind was, "Are you going to help us to build a better world? Is the United States going to be in on the peace?"

We must answer yes! And yet we cannot be effective unless we are prepared. Do Christians in America know enough about the problems, economic, political and social, which will demand solution if we are to organize a world in which peace will be possible? Are we prepared to sacrifice national pride and economic advantage in order that there may be sanity in the world?

We are not ready now. But we have time in which to become prepared.

Thousands of men and women in Britain are thinking about the "post-war world." Many conferences are being held and every visitor to those beleaguered islands brings reports of a resurgence of humility for Britain's share in the present conflict and a profound concern that there shall be no repetition of previous errors when the present war is over.

Through the Committee for Assistance to War Victims, we are expressing our sympathy for the victims of the Second World War. We must do more. Humility for our own war guilt, accompanied by a passionate and intelligent concern for a world in which justice and good will can prevail, must accompany our acts of mercy. Let us not forget our faith. Let us work that our faith may be realized.

## CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN WORK CAMPS

June 27 to August 22, 1941

SPURRED ON by the demands of young people in the National Pilgrim Fellowship for Christian service of Work Camp nature; supported by the Board of Home Missions through its Division of Christian Education; guided by the philosophy and experience of the Council for Social Action—Congregational Christian Work Camps will make their debut at an auspicious moment, the summer of 1941.

CAMPS WILL FOLLOW much the same pattern as those conducted by the American Friends Service Committee during the last seven years. The church has a mission in many areas of untouched human and social need. Congregational Christian Work Camps are dedicated to the principle that youth of the church must meet these needs through the church.

### THE CAMPS ARE—

WADLEY CAMP—at Southern Union College in rural Alabama. Fee, \$50.00

SCHAUFFLER CAMP—Cleveland, Ohio—industrial area. Fee, \$50.00

MEROM CAMP—Merom Institute, Merom, Indiana. In cooperation with the American Friends Service Committee. Fee, \$75.00

SANTA CLARA CAMP—migrant camp near Mountain View, Calif. Also in cooperation with the Friends. Fee, \$75.00

A few scholarships are available for Congregational Christian young people in each of these Camps.

DEERING SERVICE PROJECT—A special project in New Hampshire.

For Work Camp folders, application blanks and other information, write to the

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14 Beacon Street      Boston, Mass.